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REV. MR. BACON'S

Plea for Africa,

JULY 4, 1825.

A Plea for Africa;

DELIVERED IN NEW-HAVEN,

JULY 4th, 1825.

By LEONARD BACON,
Pastor of the First Church in New-Haven.

Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.——Prov. xxxi. 9.

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NEW-HAVEN:
PRINTED BY T. G. WOODWARD AND CO.
1825.

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☞ The substance of the following discourse was delivered also in Boston, July 5th, 1824. The author has now consented to its publication, in the hope that it may do *something* towards extending and increasing the interest which so many minds are beginning to feel for Africa. He is not so presumptuous as to expect that these few pages will avail to awaken in others the enthusiasm of which he is conscious, and which has gained strength by years of deliberate reflection. His prayer is that his fellow Christians, and especially his brethren in the ministry, may be persuaded to *examine* a subject on which too many form their opinions without deliberation or inquiry.

A PLEA FOR AFRICA.

I COME before you to day, my friends and fellow citizens, that I may plead for Africa. And as I could not ask for an audience more favourable than an assembly of American Christians, so I could not seek an occasion more auspicious than that which this anniversary has offered.

To day we remember that we are Americans. The voice of jubilee is heard in our land, from the ocean to the mountains. Eight millions of freemen are rejoicing in their liberty, and calling to mind those high recollections of the past that glorify our national history, and those loftier anticipations that light up before us the obscurity of the future. Sharing in the enthusiasm which the occasion inspires, we seem almost to forget our individual existence in the consciousness that we are members of a great and happy community. The man who rejoices to day, rejoices not in the enjoyments by which he is distinguished from his fellows around him, but in those common blessings which he shares with the meanest and the proudest of his countrymen. His personal joys and selfish purposes are forgotten for the moment, while his spirit rises to a wider range of thought, and to the exercise of nobler affections. A nation utters her voice of gladness to day, and he who rejoices with her, rejoices in the happiness of thousands whom he has never seen, and with whom he has no fellowship, but the fellowship of a common nature and the fellowship of a common country.

I may hail the occasion then, as auspicious to my cause, inasmuch as the feelings of patriotism which it inspires in every bosom,

are akin to those still nobler feelings, which my argument must presuppose within you, and to which it must be mainly addressed. But still more may I congratulate myself, that I am permitted to plead before those, in whose hearts the enthusiasm of the patriot, is blending to day, with the devotion of the Christian, and who have come up to the temple of God, that they may learn to sanctify the fervency of the one, with the purity of the other.

We might dwell in our thoughts, on those topics of exultation, which the occasion affords—on the unrivalled prosperity of our country, and the perfect beauty of our political institutions—on the bright memory of the past, and the still brighter prospect of the future;—and from all these contemplations learn no holier lesson, than to indulge the unhallowed exultation of national pride, or to cherish the bloody fanaticism of national ambition. But there are other feelings, more dignified in their aspect, and more ennobling in their influence, which the solemnities that now engage us, are designed to awaken. We look back on the ages that are past. Two centuries ago, this wide continent was a wilderness, unvisited, and unexplored. Then came our pilgrim fathers, and erected here the ensigns of their freedom, and the altars of their religion. They contended with difficulties to which even fable can hardly yield a parallel; but their faith, and courage, and devotion, were mightier than their trials, and in the midst of peril, they became the founders of an empire. We look around on the present condition of our country. Our coast is adorned with an hundred cities, all humming with the noise of trade, and our bays and rivers are sprinkled with the sails of commerce. Where the wilderness lay in its dark and untrodden luxuriance, a thousand villages are smiling in the face of heaven, and the fields are whitening for the harvest. The land where the Puritans found a refuge has become the home of freedom; and under the republican institutions which they established, eight millions of citizens are enjoying a political happiness such as the historian has never recorded, and (I may say) such as the philosopher has never imagined.

The halls of science, and the schools of elementary instruction, which the Puritans erected, are still the memorials of their wisdom; and the new efforts that are made from year to year for the advancement and for the general diffusion of knowledge, testify that the men of this age have not entirely degenerated from the spirit of their fathers. And above all, the religion of the Puritans, which kindled in them their stern spirit of independence, and their ardent love of knowledge; the religion which led them over the wide and then hardly navigated waters of the Atlantic; the religion which made them heroes in enterprise and martyrs in endurance;—that religion is exerting over our national character to day, an influence more sacred, and a dominion more powerful, than it has possessed before since the time when our fathers lifted up their voices in the wilderness, and with no walls around them but the everlasting hills, and with no roof above them but the arch of heaven, offered their simple and solemn worship to him who dwelleth not in temples made with hands. We look forward;—and it seems as if all that is inspiring in our history, and all that is happy in our present condition, were but the dawning of our day. We are in the very infancy of our being, and as no nation could ever boast of a history more abundant in high and holy remembrances than ours; as no political institutions were ever so perfect, and no political happiness was ever so unmingled as ours; so to no people under heaven was it ever permitted to contemplate a prospect of future prosperity more magnificent than that which is opening before us. These lofty recollections, this thrilling consciousness, these inspiring hopes, we need not check; for who hath forbidden us to indulge them? But in this consecrated place, as our national happiness rises before us in all its aspects of past, and present, and to come, we cannot fail to reflect—it is the doing of Jehovah, and it is marvellous in our eyes. The doing of Jehovah! Where now is the pride that was stirring within us? The doing of Jehovah! The thought raises us to a higher sphere of contemplation. It gives us a dignity of national existence which the un-

believer has never dreamed of. It connects us with the vast designs of that Eternal Providence which will rescue humanity from darkness and misery and death, and renovate our world in the image of heaven. It was God who "sifted a kingdom," the freest and noblest on the globe, and gathered out our fathers like the wheat from the chaff. It was God who defended them from the perils of the deep, and the perils of the wilderness. It was God who made them to flourish, and broke the weapons that were formed against them. It is God who hath spread out our land like the garden of Eden, who hath made it free as its winds and its waters, and filled it with the light of science and the glories of his own eternal truth. It is God who hath opened before us that high career upon which we are entering, and who hath given us renown among the nations. With these reflections teaching us to check the workings of our pride, extinguishing the fires of a lawless ambition, and elevating our contemplations to the grand purposes of God's benevolence, we feel that it is neither arrogance nor enthusiasm to say, that He whom the Puritans worshipped, brought them forth from their house of bondage, and planted them here on the shores of New-England, that the nation which should spring from them might lead in the march of human improvement; and that the country blessed in their prayers, and hallowed by their graves, might send forth from its borders the institutions of freedom and the light of salvation, to the ends of the world.

I say, then, my fellow Christians, it is right that you should seek to shed over your gladness the sanctifying influence of devotion, and to connect the associations of this day with those principles and efforts of benevolence that raise us to a fellowship with God. And standing here to speak for Africa to day, I will not affect a diffidence which I do not feel; for I know that with such a cause and on such an occasion I cannot plead before you in vain. I might indeed be diffident, if it were my task to excite within you, by the powers of language and fancy, the feelings of a transient benevolence: nay, I should despair of success, if I imagined I

had any thing to do but simply to lay before you the degradation for which I would engage your sympathies, and the plans of doing good for which I would secure your efforts.

In describing the misery of that devoted race, whose cause it is my lot to advocate, I can only tell you a story of simple, unalleviated, unromantic wretchedness. There are no spirit-stirring associations to break the monotony of the description. I can tell of no distant and shadowy antiquity, when Africa was the cradle of the human race, and the seat of science and arts and empire. I cannot compare the darkness that is now resting on those tribes, with some period of ancient glory; nor can I enlighten the picture of their present degradation, by alluding to some former age of Arcadian felicity. There are no lighter shades to variegate the gloom. The wretchedness is so great and so unmingled, that the mind shrinks from the conception, and seems almost ready to take refuge in a vague and quiet incredulity. And when I have told you what this wretchedness is, my plea is ended for the present,—I shall urge no other argument.

The country for which I am pleading extends from the Desert of Sahara to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. With the exception of here and there a tract of complete and desolate barrenness, this wide region is fertile, almost without a parallel, and the exuberance of its productions is such as we can only with difficulty imagine. It is a country varied, like our own fair land, with mountains and forests, and watered by

"Streams that to the sea roll ocean-like."

Abounding in all the resources that might minister employment or sustenance to a civilized and happy population, it is occupied by fifty millions of men, as wild as the forests which they inhabit, and almost as far removed from the high character and high destiny of our nature, as the lion and the tiger with whom they contend for the mastery of the soil. They are men indeed with all the instincts of humanity, and they walk beneath their burning sky with the

port and bearing of manhood. Theirs are the affections of kindred, the love of country and of home, and the kindness of savage hospitality. But they are barbarians; and with the nobler instincts of our nature and the rude virtues of their condition, they combine all that is degrading in human imbecility, and all that is horrible in human depravity, unrefined by civilization and unrestrained by the influence of Christian truth. They are men indeed, and when individuals from among them have been placed in circumstances favourable to the development of their powers, they have fully vindicated their title to all the honours of our nature. But in Africa the basest superstition has conspired with the darkest ignorance to stupify the intellect, as well as to brutalize the affections; and in both cases their influence has been as deadly in its operation, as it is unlimited in its extent.

Now, what one is there among you, my hearers, who needs to be informed that these fifty millions of immortal beings, thus brought down to the very level of the brutes that perish, have a claim upon the sympathies of Christians? Do you find it difficult to conceive of their condition? It is just what yours would be, if all the arts, and knowledge, and refinement of our land were to vanish, and the darkness of paganism were to settle on all the shrines of our devotion. It is just what it must be, where treachery and lust are unforbidden, where rapine and murder are unrestrained, and where all the horrors of a savage warfare are perpetual.

Yes, in Africa the horrors of savage warfare are perpetual. Not that these tribes are created with a peculiar ferocity of disposition: so far from it, their nature seems to possess an uncommon share of what is mild and amiable. And yet, you might traverse the whole region of which I speak, and you would find it, in all its districts, a theatre of terror, flight, conflagration, murder, and whatever is still more dreadful in earthly suffering. You might come to one place, where there was a village yesterday, and find only its smoking ruins, and the calcined bones of its murdered population. You

might pass on to another, and think that here there must be peace, but while the inhabitants are beginning to gather around you, with a timid curiosity, there is an outcry of alarm—the foe is upon them —their houses are in flames—their old men are smitten with the sword—their infants are thrown to the tigers, and their young men are swept into captivity. You might follow the captives—weeping, bleeding—to the sea-shore; and there is the slave ship. We have heard of the slave trade, and of its abolition; and we have been accustomed to regard it as a thing of other years. We have heard that thirty years ago, the slave trade did exist, and its existence was the foulest blot upon the picture of our world. We have heard that those who have been laboring for the abolition of this traffic, have gained many a signal triumph over the obstinacy of the interested, and the prejudices of the ignorant; so that now, the two most enlightened and commercial nations of the world, who have one origin, one language, one religion, and we might almost say one freedom, are also united in declaring the slave trade piracy; and have thus denounced it before the world, as an outrage against the law of nations and of nature. All this is true, and at the same time it is equally true, that the slave trade is carried on, at this hour, with a cruelty, if possible, more intense and aggravated. Every year no less than sixty thousand of its victims are carried in chains across the ocean. Now, while I am speaking to this happy assembly, there is weeping and lamentation, under the palm trees of Africa; for mothers have been plundered of their children, and will not be comforted. To day, the slave ships are hovering over that devoted coast, from the Senegal to the Zaire. To night, as the African lies down in his cabin, he will feel no security; and as he sleeps, he will dream of conflagration and blood, till suddenly he awakes, and his roof is blazing above him, his wife is bleeding at his feet, his children lie fettered and helpless before him, and ere he can grasp the weapons of despair, the cold steel of the murderer is in his vitals.

It would be utterly impossible for me, or indeed for any man, to transcend, in description, the actual horrors of this trade, as they have been exhibited, again and again, in the testimony of sworn witnesses, and, as many of you have seen them exhibited from the records of judicial tribunals. You cannot therefore suspect me of attempting to impose on your feelings. I wish only to impress it on your minds, that the slave trade, though abolished by law, has never been suppressed in fact;—and then to leave it for you to judge whether the cruelty of which you have so often heard, and which was so great when the traffic was acknowledged by law, and defended by argument, is likely to be less, now that the traffic has become contraband and the subject of universal execration; so that the slave-trader is governed not only by the natural baseness of his cupidity, but by the terror of detection and the greater risk of loss, and by the consciousness of being outlawed from the sympathies of human society.

This horrible commerce in the blood of men has existed for ages; and the consequence is, that there are now descendants of Africa in every quarter of the globe. For them I plead to day, as well as for their brethren on their native continent; because wherever the children of Africa are found, they are one nation; a separate, distinct, peculiar people. I plead for the whole race; and my argument with you in their behalf is, that wherever they are found they are partakers in the misery of one common degradation. To establish this, I need not carry you out of the streets and lanes of our own city. You would scorn the imputation, and justly, if I should suggest that there is any thing here which subjects the African to peculiar disadvantages. On the contrary, it would seem far otherwise; inasmuch as slavery never existed here to any considerable extent, and for years it has been a thing unknown. Yet when you look over this city, what do you find to be the actual state and character of its coloured population? How many of the privileges which belong to other classes of society do they enjoy? How much of the happiness in which you are now rejoicing is theirs?

How many of the motives, which are urging you to honest industry or to honourable enterprise, are operating upon them? Who among them ever aspires to wealth or office, or ever dreams of intellectual pursuits or intellectual enjoyment? In short, are they not, in the estimation of the community and in their own consciousness, aliens and outcasts in the midst of the people? Now I am willing that you should take the condition of the children of Africa here, as a fair specimen of their condition, wherever they are scattered. I am willing you should believe, for the moment, that the negro is nowhere more ignorant, nowhere more despised or oppressed, than here. But at the same time, I ask you to remember that within our own borders there are nearly two millions of these beings, and in the Archipelago of the West-Indies, not less than two millions more; and then, when you have computed the amount of wretchedness which belongs to these four millions of degraded men, to judge for yourselves whether the subjects of this degradation have no claim on the sympathies and efforts of those who have been taught to love their neighbour as themselves.

And yet such a computation would fall far short of the actual amount of that wretchedness which, if I could, I would set before you. Of these four millions, the vast majority are slaves. And what is it to be a slave? We know what it is to be free. We know what it is to walk forth in the consciousness of independence, and to act with the feeling that we are responsible only to our God and to the community of which we are equal members. We know the inspiration that attends the efforts of him who can act for himself,—who labours for his family,—who identifies his interests with the welfare of a nation,—who spreads out his affections over the wide world of being. But we know not what it is to be a slave. We can conceive indeed of stripes, and corporal endurance, and long days of burning toil; but how can we conceive of that bondage of the heart, that captivity of the soul, which make the slave a wretch indeed? His intellect is a blank, and we may, perhaps, form some conception of his ignorance. The capacities

of his moral nature are a blank, and we may, perhaps, imagine that blindness. But even when we have conceived of this intellectual ignorance and this moral blindness, we know not all the degradation of the slave. We sometimes find an individual whose spirit has been broken and blasted. Some affection which engrossed his soul, and with which all his other affections were entwined, has been withered, and his heart is desolate. The hope on which all his other hopes were centred, has been destroyed, and his being is a wreck. If you have ever seen such a man, and noticed how he seemed to lose the high attributes of manhood, how his soul died within him, and he sunk down, as it were, from the elevation of his former existence,—you may conjecture, perhaps, how much of the dignity and happiness of our nature, even in minds purified by moral cultivation, and enlarged by intellectual improvement, depends on the love of social enjoyment and the softening influence of affection; and you may thus be able faintly to imagine the degradation of the slave, whose mind has scarcely been enlightened by one ray of knowledge, whose soul has never been expanded by one adequate conception of his moral dignity and moral relations, and in whose heart hardly one of those affections that soften our character, or of those hopes that animate and bless our being, has been allowed to germinate.

You have seen, my fellow Christians, something of the misery of that continent, and the degradation of that race, for which I plead before you to day. You have not seen it all; for it passes the powers of human fancy to conceive, and still more of human language to describe. But the few familiar facts which I have attempted to bring to your remembrance, are enough to awaken all the sympathies of men, and all the benevolence of Christians. We have seen a *continent* of misery, a *race* degraded from the level of humanity; and it remains for me only to show how we can operate to alleviate this misery and to remove this degradation.

The problem is, to give peace and happiness to the continent of Africa, and to elevate all her children to the rank which God has

given them in the scale of existence. As one of these objects cannot be gained without affecting the other ; so, if we would be successful in the pursuit of either, we must aim at the attainment of both. Cover Africa with the institutions of civilized freedom, and fill it with the light of knowledge and religion, and the whole negro race is raised in a moment, from its hopeless depth of degradation. And on the other hand, give freedom and intelligence and all the rights and honours of humanity to the exiled descendants of Africa, and you have completely provided for the salvation of the continent from which they sprung. After we have examined briefly these two propositions, we shall be able more distinctly to perceive the importance of comprehending both the objects of which I have spoken, in one system of exertion.

First ; by civilizing and christianizing the African continent, the degradation of Africans in other countries may be removed.

Such a civilization of that continent implies, at its outset, the final abolition of the slave trade ; in its progress, the erection of free, independent and intelligent nations ; and in its completion, all the industry and enterprise of a thronging, active, enlightened population. What will be the influence of such changes on the condition of this degraded race in other lands ?

Let the slave trade be abolished, and that which has been at once the cause of their present wretchedness, and one grand obstacle in the way of their improvement, is done away. While these men are sold like cattle in the shambles, what can you do for the general elevation of their character ? While thousands of fresh victims are continually poured in to swell the tide of misery, what can you do for the alleviation of this wo ? Let the fountain be dried up from which the misery has flowed, and you may operate on the evil to be remedied with some prospect of success.

Let there be erected one free and intelligent African empire, and the reproach of the negro will cease. There is a scorn which follows the very name of an African. He is hunted down by a contempt which he can never escape. He is treated—whatever

may be your opinion about his native character, he is in fact treated as an inferior being. He is one of that people who have been meted out and trodden down, plundered and sold, persecuted and oppressed from the beginning of time. And the consciousness, which he cannot evade, that he is despised by others, teaches him, at length, to despise himself, and robs him of the dignity of human character. Now let there be erected one Christian African republic—powerful, enlightened, and happy, like ours—whose flag shall wave in the breezes of every ocean, whose commerce shall carry wealth to every port, whose ambassadors shall demand respect in every capital, whose patriots and sages, whose poets and artists, shall share the admiration of every people; and this reproach, degrading as crime, and cruel as the grave, will cease. The negro, exulting in the consciousness of manhood, will stretch out his hand unto him who hath made of one blood all nations, to dwell on the face of the earth.

Once more: Let Africa be filled with the industry of a free and enterprising population, and slavery can exist no longer. This slavery is the bitterest ingredient in that misery which we deplore. In all that we have contemplated there is nothing more oppressive to our best feelings, than the thought, that so many millions of our fellow men are the subjects of a thraldom which despoils them of the attributes of intellectual and moral, and even of social existence, and makes them the mere machines of avarice. BUT LET AFRICA BE CIVILIZED, AND SLAVERY MUST BE ANNIHILATED. It is a principle which the progress of political science has clearly and indisputably established—a principle that illustrates at once the wisdom of the Creator and the blindness of human cupidity—that it is cheaper to hire the labour of freemen than it is to compel the labour of slaves. From this principle it results, that the productions of slave labour can never enter into competition, on equal terms, with the productions of free labour. An illustration of this is furnished by the fact, that the sugar of the West-Indies, which is produced by the labour of slaves, demands the assistance

of a high protecting duty, before it can contend in the English market with the sugar of the East, which is raised by the hands of freemen. We see then, that the system of slavery can be supported in a country, only so long as the slaveholders can retain either a complete or partial monopoly of such articles as they are able to raise by the labour of their drudges. And thus, whenever the civilized and enterprising population of Africa shall send forth their productions to compete in every market, with the sugar, and cotton, and coffee, of the West-Indies and Southern America, the planters will be compelled, by that spirit of improvement which always springs from competition, to substitute the cheaper process for the more expensive, to adopt the labour of freemen instead of the labour of slaves, in a word, to convert their slaves into freemen.

The conclusion from the principle which I have attempted to illustrate and apply is, let Africa be civilized and every African throughout the world will be made a freeman, not by some sudden convulsion, demolishing the fabric of society, but by the tendencies of nature and the arrangements of Providence, slowly yet surely accomplishing the happiness of man. The change will be certain indeed, as the revolution of the seasons, but gradual as the growth of an empire.

It is equally true, in the second place, that by elevating the character of Africans in foreign countries, the civilization of their native continent may be greatly and rapidly promoted.

If ever Africa is civilized, as it unquestionably will be, the change must be brought about by the return of her exiled children. Political revolutions, the progress of the Christian religion, and the establishment of colonies, are the only important means of civilization with which history makes us acquainted. That any political revolution, such as the extensive conquests of some foreign empire or of some native tribe, will ever accomplish the renovation of Africa, appears beyond the compass of probability, whether we consider the country to be overrun, or the barbarians to be subju-

gated. That white men alone can never extensively propagate Christianity on those shores, and that colonies of white men can never flourish there, seems rational in itself, and has been confirmed by the experience of former efforts. If ever Africa is civilized, it must be by the return of her exiled children. And those exiles are even now beginning to return. They have planted their feet on the soil of their fathers, and they have found that the influences so deadly tothe white man, are powerless upon them. In the land of the slave-trade they have set up the banner of freedom, and where they are building their homes and cultivating their fields, the wilderness echoes to their songs, and the sabbath smiles on their devotions. Now in what way can you more powerfully or more directly promote the civilization of Africa, than by enlarging the views and elevating the character of her children here, and thus making them at once more anxious to enjoy and more able to improve the advantages which their country is offering them? Or how can you imagine a more splendid contribution to the cause of human happiness, than you might make, if you would train up and send to Africa such men as were the Pilgrims of Plymouth, or the Puritans of New-Haven,—men with all that wisdom, and all that dauntless piety which gave renown to the Winthrops and the Winslows, the Davenports and Hookers of our early history?

We see, then, that by civilizing Africa, the degradation of Africans in other countries may be forever and completely removed; and by elevating the character of these exiles, the civilization of their native continent may be easily effected. And if these two objects are thus intimately blended, so that the first can be perfectly gained only by means of the second, and the complete attainment of the second is equally dependent on the first; it requires no great sagacity to reach the conclusion that any efforts which may aim at either, must be imperfect in themselves and inadequate to their end, till they shall become the parts of such a system of exertions as shall comprehend in its design the accomplishment of both. And it is equally evident, that whenever such a

system shall be organized, every thing that may be done to give new impulse to any one department of its operation, will accelerate the motion and increase the momentum of the whole.

I now proceed to say, that those projects of benevolence towards Africa to which the attention of the American public has already been invited, do in fact constitute such a system. The means of elementary instruction and the apparatus of moral and religious culture, which are employed on our coloured population, lie at the foundation of all African improvement. The societies for the abolition of slavery are continually urging the claims of these unfortunates with a zeal which scorns to be weary, and which gathers impulse from discouragement. The scheme of an African seminary for liberal education, which has been as yet only slightly discussed, will not be forgotten; for there are men engaged in its behalf, who will never rest while God spares them to the world, till the chasm which they now lament shall have been filled up, and the school which they have projected shall be sending forth its pupils to become throughout the earth the noblest and most efficient benefactors of Africa. The efforts proposed for the improvement of Hayti, may be expected, by and by, when the fever of novelty and the reaction consequent on its subsiding shall have passed away, to kindle among our blacks a spirit of enterprise, and ultimately to bestow on the subjects of Boyer the happiness of a civilized and Christian people, as well as the honors of an independent Republic. And to consummate the system, the institution for which I am particularly desirous to excite your immediate interest, is sending back the descendants of Africa to the land of their fathers, that they may extend over the continent which God has given them for their inheritance, the light and blessedness of Christian civilization.

After having detained you so long, I will not exhaust your patience by detailing the plans, or the history, or the prospects of the American Colonization Society. You know that its design is to establish on the coast of Africa, colonies of free people of colour from America; and after what I have already said, I need not trace

out the influence which the successful prosecution of this design must have on the civilization of that continent, or on the character and happiness of our own coloured population. You can imagine for yourselves how such a colony, founded in the principles of American freedom, and supported by American liberality and enterprise, would grow and flourish, giving a new employment and a new direction to commerce, adorning with villages and cultivated fields the land that is now half desolate with the ravages of the slave trade, and overspread with the untamed luxuriancy of the wilderness. You can imagine how the rude tribes, gazing with astonishment on the arts of a civilized community, would soon become desirous of sharing in a power so wonderful; and being cut off from that traffic in each other's blood, by which they live, would gradually engage in those pursuits and acquire that knowledge with which a people must commence the career of improvement. You can imagine how the light of Christian truth might be made to beam forth on the benighted Pagans. You can imagine how the negro, here despised and broken-spirited, would there stand up in the full majesty of manhood, and with the inspiration of all the motives that are stimulating you to enterprise and effort. You can imagine too, how all this might operate for the improvement and happiness of the African who should remain among us, exciting him to industry, and bestowing upon him the consciousness of wider and higher capacities. Leaving all this to your reflections, I will only say, that though the society has contended from the beginning, and is still struggling with grievous embarrassments, its disappointments have been fewer, its calamities less terrible, and its success more rapid, than ever attended the progress of any similar enterprise. It has obtained a rich and beautiful territory, adequate to all its present purposes. It has succeeded in planting there a colony, now consisting of nearly four hundred individuals who are rapidly preparing the means of sustenance, not only for themselves, but also for the thousands who are anxious to join them.

So far as the experiment has been conducted, it has been successful; and all that the managers now need, for the rapid prosecution of their designs, is the voice of public opinion to cheer them on, and to direct, for their assistance, the energies of our national councils; the contributions of the benevolent, to give them strength, and the prayers of the churches, to call down upon them the blessing of heaven. The voice of public opinion in favor of this enterprise, is becoming louder and louder. In every section of our country, the ministers of Jesus have been pleading for it to day. From hundreds of churches the cry of supplication has gone up to heaven in its behalf. And not a few are the freemen, who, in the midst of their rejoicing to day, have remembered the miseries of Africa, and offered their contributions for her relief. Can you withhold from such an enterprise *your* voice of approbation? Can you, if you pray for any thing—can you refuse to pray for this undertaking? Can you look round on the abundance wherewith God has blessed you, and refuse to bestow some little offering in behalf of such a cause?

I have now completed my design. I have not indeed spoken of the awful curse of Heaven on our own land, or of the measures which MUST speedily be adopted for its complete and eternal abolition. These things, if God shall give me strength, and opportunity, I owill bring more distinctly to your notice at some future period. All that I designed for this occasion, I have done. I have set before you the condition and character of those for whom I plead; and I have told you how we may operate for the alleviation of that misery, and the removal of that degradation which I have led you to contemplate. And, surely, if it is the noblest attribute of our nature, which spreads out the circle of our sympathies, to include the whole family of man, and sends forth our affections to embrace the ages of a distant futurity, it must be regarded as a privilege no less exalted, that our means of *doing* good are limited by no remoteness of country, or distance of duration, but we may operate, if we will, to assuage the miseries of an-

other hemisphere, or to prevent the necessities of an unborn generation. The time has been, when a man might weep over the wrongs of Africa, and he might look forward to weep over the hopelessness of her degradation, till his heart should bleed; and yet his tears would be all that he could give her. He might relieve the beggar at his door, but he could do nothing for a dying continent. He might provide for his children, but he could do nothing for the nations that were yet to be born to an inheritance of utter wretchedness. Then, the privilege of engaging in schemes of magnificent benevolence, belonged only to princes, and to men of princely possessions: but now, the progress of improvement has brought down this privilege to the reach of every individual. The institutions of our age are a republic of benevolence, and all may share in the unrestrained and equal democracy. This privilege is ours. We may stretch forth our hand, if we will, to enlighten the Hindoo, or to tame the savage of the wilderness. It is ours, if we will, to put forth our contributions, and thus to operate, not ineffectually, for the relief and renovation of a continent, over which one tide of misery has swept, without ebb, and without restraint, for unremembered centuries. It is ours, if we will, to do something that shall tell on all the coming ages of a race which has been persecuted and enslaved, trodden down and despised, for a thousand generations. Our Father has made us the almoners of his love. He has raised us to partake, as it were, in the ubiquity of his own beneficence. Shall we be unworthy of the trust?—God forbid!

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